

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 734

UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 3329

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR SW

SUBJECT: KING GUSTAF'S FUNERAL

REF: OLSEN-OWENS TELCON

FOLLOWING IS SHORT BIO OF KING GUSTAF AS REQUESTED TELCON.  
BIO OF NEW KING BEING SENT SEPTTEL.

KING GUSTAF VI ADOLF WAS BORN NOVEMBER 11, 1882.  
SUCCEEDED TO THE THRONE AT THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER,  
KING GUSTAF V, ON OCTOBER 29, 1950. IN 1905 HE MARRIED  
THE BRITISH PRINCESS MARGARET, WHO DIED MAY 1, 1920.  
HE ENTERED A SECOND MARRIAGE IN 1923, WITH LADY LOUISE  
MOUNTBATTEN, WHO DIED IN 1965.

THERE WERE FIVE CHILDREN IN THE FIRST MARRIAGE, NONE  
IN SECOND. THE ELDEST SON GUSTAF ADOLF, WHO WAS CROWN  
PRINCE AT THE TIME, WAS KILLED IN AN AIR CRASH IN 1947.  
THUS, GUSTAF VI'S GRANDSON, SON OF GUSTAF ADOLF, BECAME  
CROWN PRINCE. THE OTHER SONS ARE SIGVARD, BERTIL, AND  
CARL JOHAN. SIGVARD AND CARL JOHAN HAVE BOTH MARRIED  
COMMONERS AND ARE NO LONGER IN THE SUCCESSION TO THE  
THRONE. THE ONLY DAUGHTER, INGRID, IS THE DOWAGER QUEEN  
OF DENMARK. PRINCE BERTIL HAS REMAINED UNMARRIED, AND  
TOOK ON MANY CEREMONIAL FUNCTIONS DURING THE TIME THE  
PRESENT CROWN PRINCE WAS TOO YOUNG TO PLAY HIS PART.

AS CROWN PRINCE, GUSTAF ADOLF AND CROWN PRINCESS  
LOUISE VISITED THE UNITED STATES IN 1926 AND IN 1938,  
ON THE LATTER OCCASION IN CONNECTION WITH THE 300TH  
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ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE NEW SWEDEN COLONY IN

DELAWARE. HE ALSO TRAVELLED WIDELY IN EUROPE.

KING GUSTAF ADOLF WAS KNOWN FOR HIS GREAT INTEREST AND EXPERTISE IN ARCHEOLOGY AND ANCIENT ART. HE PARTICIPATED IN SEVERAL ARCHEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS, PARTICULARLY IN ITALY. HE WAS A QUITE MAN WITH GREAT COMPOSURE AND DIGNITY, BUT ALSO WELL KNOWN FOR HIS WRY SENSE OF HUMOR WITH INTIMATE FRIENDS. ALTHOUGH INTELLIGENT, WELL-INFORMED, AND WELL-READ, HE CHOSE TO TAKE NO PART IN POLITICS, AND THUS THE MONARCH BECAME A FIGUREHEAD DURING HIS REIGN, ALTHOUGH ACCORDING TO CONSTITUTION HE RETAINS CONSIDERABLE POWER (VIRTUALLY ALL MONARCH'S POWERS WILL BE TAKEN AWAY WITH PLANNED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE AS OF JANUARY 1, 1975). KING GUSTAF HAD A NATURAL TOUCH WITH THE SWEDISH PEOPLE, AND THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HE WAS AN OBJECT OF RESPECT AND LOVE FOR VIRTUALLY THE ENTIRE SWEDISH POPULATION, WHATEVER THEIR POLITICS.

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